

## SRC OU EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES PROCEDURES

These are guidelines for students who are unable to attend, submit coursework or sit examinations.

(Note: References in this document to Boards of Examiners apply to Progress and Award Boards and Course/Subject Committees which meet to consider student progress.)

### CONTENTS

- A. What are 'Extenuating Circumstances'?
- B. Absence from the College
- C. Regulations
- D. How do I obtain an EC1 form?
- E. When should I submit an EC1 form?
- F. How do I submit an EC1 form?
- G. Information required ?
- H. What happens when IT equipment fails?
- I. How are extenuating circumstances judged?
- J. False Claims
- K. Data Protection Act 1998
- L. Where can I get more guidance?
- M. Appeals on basis of Extenuating Circumstances

#### A. What are 'Extenuating Circumstances'?

**Extenuating circumstances refer to something unforeseeable or unavoidable e.g. you couldn't write because you suffered a broken arm just prior to an examination.** They are normally circumstances beyond the student's control which either prevent the student from taking an examination(s) or submitting coursework, or which affect academic performance in coursework or examination(s). Extenuating circumstances will usually be health related or of a personal nature.

#### B. Absence from the College

A student who has not been in attendance for more than three days through illness or other cause must notify immediately Campus Services by calling 0300 123 1223 or email [info@src.src.uk](mailto:info@src.src.uk). Where the absence is for a period of more than five working days, and is caused by illness which may affect the student's studies, the student shall arrange for a medical certificate to be presented to Course Coordinator. In circumstances where the Course Coordinator is unavailable the Deputy Head of School should be notified.

Research shows that attendance is a key component in academic success and we hope that this will help academic staff to be aware of any problems you might be having as they occur and to offer you advice and help or refer you to another service in the College as appropriate.

### C. Regulations Governing Student Assessment in Coursework and Examination

(a) Acceptable Exceptional circumstances:

- (i) written medical evidence, or evidence of compassionate circumstances, relevant to the performance of a candidate in an examination must be presented to the Course Coordinator no later than five working days following the examination;
- (ii) written medical evidence, or evidence of compassionate circumstances, relevant to the performance of a candidate in coursework must be presented to the Course Coordinator by the date on which the work was due to be submitted.

(b) Evidence of ill-health must be authenticated by the candidate's medical advisor. Medical certificates should be forwarded directly to the Course Coordinator / Subject Tutor. Self-certification will not be accepted.

### (c) Circumstances that are NOT taken into account

It is not possible to list every circumstance that the Board of Examiners would reject. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, general pressure of academic work is not taken to be circumstances beyond your control, as you are expected to plan your work schedule.

A claim form (EC1) should be completed by a student affected by extenuating circumstances.

### D. How do I obtain an EC1 form?

The form is available from your Course Coordinator or you can download the form from [here](#)

### E. When should I submit an EC1 form?

It is your responsibility to inform the Course Coordinator/Subject Tutor about extenuating circumstances that affected your academic performance by completing an EC1 form. **Although you may have previously discussed your difficulties with staff, this does not in itself constitute the submission of extenuating circumstances.** The form should be returned at the earliest opportunity and, save in exceptional circumstances, **no later than the date of submission of coursework or 5 days after the date of examination.** If circumstances are such that you are going to be unable to submit an assignment on time, then you should complete an EC1 form without delay. **You may be required to submit work done to date.** If documentary evidence (see section H) is unavailable, the form should still be submitted by the due deadline with a note to say that this evidence will follow.

**Once the Board of Examiners has met, it is too late to submit an EC1 form. Information about how to appeal against the decision of the Board of Examiners is available in a separate publication. (See Section N below)**

#### **F. How do I submit an EC1 form?**

The completed form must be submitted to the Course Coordinator. It may be sent by email or post if you are unable to attend the College. The email address for the programme Course Coordinator is available in the Course Handbook section 3 and postal addresses are available [here](#). Evidence that is not immediately available should be forwarded as soon as possible.

#### **G. Information Required**

It is your responsibility to supply the appropriate evidence to support your claim. The circumstances should be described clearly. The EC1 form should contain the essential information to enable an informed decision to be made. You should only include on the form details of the specific coursework or examinations that have been affected by illness, personal difficulties etc. Make sure you explain the impact these circumstances had on your performance (e.g. how long you were unable to attend due to illness).

Examples of appropriate evidence include: a doctor's note, a discharge letter from a hospital or a letter from a professional counsellor. There are exceptional cases where such evidence is inappropriate or unavailable, for example because your doctor does not provide certificates for minor illness. However, in all other cases, students will be expected to provide documentary evidence. Where it is reasonable to expect such evidence and that evidence is missing, it is unlikely that the application will be successful.

A letter from your GP stating that you were seen on a particular date and you told him/her that you had been ill will not normally be accepted by the Board of Examiners. If you are claiming a minor illness has affected work or caused you to miss a deadline then please note that documentary evidence should have been submitted at the time of your absence (Section A).

If you have been receiving treatment for a serious or long-term medical condition which you believe has seriously affected your work over a prolonged period, you must submit appropriate evidence.

You are also asked on the form to specify what outcome you would, within reason, consider desirable. This will normally be either a first sit in examination or class test, or an extension of time to submit coursework. Please note that marks cannot be adjusted due to extenuating circumstances.

You may find it helpful to discuss your application with your Course Coordinator / Subject Tutor, in addition to submitting your claim form. You will not have to disclose sensitive personal details if you prefer not to. Should you be reluctant to specify such details on the EC1 form, you should

seek the advice from Student Services. Great care is taken over the confidentiality of information provided by students.

Please seek guidance from your Course Coordinator / Subject Tutor if you are in doubt about what would be appropriate evidence.

#### **H. What happens when IT equipment fails?**

In most circumstances failure of IT equipment will not be taken into account. Students are expected to make a backup copy of all their work. This should be stored separately from the computer.

#### **I. How are extenuating circumstances judged?**

All extenuating circumstances will be judged by the Extenuating Circumstance Panel and recommendations presented to the Board of Examiners who makes the final decision. The Panel consists of the Head of School, Deputy Head of School, Course Coordinator and Personal Tutor. The College seeks to determine whether, and to what extent, extenuating circumstances have affected your academic performance, and what action, if any, can be taken. In assessing the significance of extenuating circumstances the College will normally take into account:

- a** the severity of the problem and the length of time involved;
- b** any supporting documentary evidence;
- c** whether it is possible to gauge the effect of the extenuating circumstances upon academic performance;

#### **J. False Claims**

You should note that submitting a false claim could be regarded as an attempt to gain unfair advantage and could constitute a breach of discipline under the College's disciplinary procedures.

#### **K. Data Protection Act 1998**

By submitting an extenuating circumstances form you are agreeing to the College holding this personal data for the purposes of processing your claim. The College will hold this data in accordance with its notification under the 1998 Data Protection Act.

#### **L. Where can I get more guidance?**

If after having read these notes you feel you need more help in putting forward your extenuating circumstances, you should contact your Course Coordinator / Subject Tutor or Student Services.

#### **M. Appeals on the basis of Extenuating Circumstances (HE and Validated course)**

Appeals on the basis of extenuating circumstances are clearly outlined in the College Assessment Appeals Policy which can be accessed [here](#)

